

North Transfer Station

DRAFT Stakeholder Workshop #2 Summary

Oct. 21, 2010

Institute for Systems Biology • 5 to 8 PM

ATTENDEES

Stakeholders

Trish McNeil
Toby Thaler
Bill Bergstrom
Jessica Vets
Pat Finn Coven
Barbara Luecke
Bob Quinn
Rob Stephenson
David Rugerio
Cathy Tuttle
Paul Willumson

Seattle Public Utilities

Nancy Ahern
Bill Benzer
Tim Croll
Jeff Neuner
Ken Snipes

EnviroIssues

Penny Mabie (facilitator)
Alissa VandenBerghe

HDR

Dan Costello
Deb Frye (presenter)
Olivia Williams

JR Miller & Associates

Jim Miller
Clark Davis

Observers

Richard Floisand
Ed Andrews
Norm Davis
Allison Hogue
Kieron Walford
Rob Schwartz
Erika Bigelow
Karl Hufnagel
Craig Williamson

MEETING PURPOSE

The purpose of this meeting was to review four updated site concepts and five new concepts, further understand functional needs of recycling and transfer facilities, apply community values to the various concepts, identify tradeoffs, narrow options and recommend five concepts to be further refined.

AGENDA ITEMS AND DISCUSSION

Welcome and Introductions

Penny Mabie, EnviroIssues

Penny Mabie convened the meeting, asked everyone to introduce themselves, reviewed the last meeting summary and reviewed the agenda and purpose of the meeting.

Penny explained the revised public involvement schedule. The main change is that the community open house was moved before the fourth workshop so that community members have an opportunity to view the final two concepts and provide input prior to the stakeholders recommending one preferred concept.

Project updates

Bill Benzer, SPU

- The Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT) and SPU are currently looking at a traffic circle at N. 36th Street and Interlake Avenue. A petition was circulated and it received 60% of residents' approval. However, after a circle was painted on the road to reflect the size of the traffic circle, many neighbors rescinded their approval. There will be a meeting at 10 a.m. on Nov. 4th to discuss the traffic circle with the neighbors.
- No one from the neighborhood came forward to manage the petition process for the traffic circle at N. 36th Street and Woodlawn Avenue N. A stakeholder said she didn't know what the process was to manage the petition but would be interested in organizing it for this circle.
- SDOT has recommended that curb bulbs be installed for the crosswalk at N. 34th Street and Woodlawn Avenue N. to shorten the distance and increase pedestrian safety. SDOT is currently designing the curb bulbs so that a cost estimate can be created.
- SPU and SDOT have looked into converting Woodlawn Avenue N. into a one-way street. After SDOT's review, they decided that making it a one-way street would not lower speeds. A stakeholder clarified that the neighborhood wasn't concerned about speed, but rather drivers using Woodlawn as a cut-through. An observer added that SDOT asked her to conduct another two-hour study to record license plates and where they enter and exit Woodlawn Avenue N.
- SPU is working with SDOT to increase signage along the preferred route to the current transfer station. SDOT will hopefully place the signs by the end of the year.
- SPU checked with the Department of Planning and Development (DPD) about the number of parking stalls required for the different scenarios and learned that the number is based on the building's square footage. Parking stall information is included in the matrix handout.
- SPU is currently in the process of surveying recycling customers. Jeff Neuner added that the preliminary data shows that over half of the recycling customers are businesses. Business recyclables include primarily cardboard from packaging and other shipping materials.
- At the last workshop there were some questions about the different sized recycling buildings. We've developed a programming document identifying square footage requirements for project recycling volumes and a floor plan for the proposed recycling/reuse building and are included in the handouts for Workshop #2.
- SPU wrote a response letter to the Wallingford Community Council in response to the letter the Council submitted to SPU.

Green roof overview

Bill Benzer, SPU

- A green roof is a light-weight vegetated roof over a protective root barrier and waterproof membrane.
- Potential benefits of green roofs include: stormwater retention, energy conservation, heat island effect, air quality/CO₂, aesthetics and public space, habitat for flora and fauna and extended roof life.
- There are two main types of green roofs: intensive and extensive.
 - Intensive: This type is considered a traditional "roof garden." Soil depths are typically greater than 8 inches. Plants, shrubs and small trees are usually used and the roofs are often publicly accessible.
 - Extensive: This type is thinner than an intensive roof, at 2-6 inches; the plants are generally drought resistant.

A stakeholder asked how deep the roof at city hall is. Bill replied that since it's an extensive roof it's probably about six inches deep.

Nine Concepts – What's New?

Deb Frye, HDR

Deb Frye gave a brief overview of the concepts:

- Concept 1: Base (*revised from Wkshp #1*)
- Concept 2: Maximum (*revised from Wkshp #1*)
- Concept 3: No Rezone, No Street Vacation (*revised from Wkshp #1*)
- Concept 4: Buffer Status Quo (*revised from Wkshp #1*)
- Concept 8: Vista (*new*)
- Concept 9: Stacked with Rezone (*new*)
- Concept 10: Stacked without Rezone (*new*)
- Concept 11: Non-Industrial Buffer (*new*)
- Concept 12: Western Entry (*new*)

A stakeholder asked how much square footage is needed for the recycling/reuse building. Bill Benzer replied that 10,500 ft² is the optimum size.

A stakeholder asked if the green roof shown in Concept 8 would be available to the public and if it could be seen from the public space. Deb said it will be below street grade so that it could be seen from the public space, but that the roof would most likely not be accessible. Bill added that a "walkable" roof is much heavier and needs strong reinforcements. Another stakeholder asked how tall the northeast wall in Concept 8 would be. Deb Frye replied that it would be 20 feet tall.

A stakeholder asked if rezoning would be required for constructing a road through the industrial buffer. Tim said DPD has indicated that since the road is considered a pre-existing condition that rezoning the industrial buffer would not be required. However, the 1550 building would still need to be rezoned. The stakeholder expressed concern over that response. Another stakeholder asked to clarify that the DPD's response was that a rezone isn't needed. Tim replied that SPU will continue working with DPD to ensure the proper zoning is in place for the option that is chosen.

A stakeholder asked why SPU hadn't vacated all of Carr Place N. in Concept 10. Tim replied that when a street is vacated, the adjacent property's on each side of the street gain half of the roadway so only half of the street width is shown as being added to the transfer station site on the figure.

Nancy Ahern asked if Concept 2 was the only option with separated lanes for commercial and self haulers. Bill replied that Concept 4 also has separate lanes. A stakeholder asked if SPU has a preference for separated lanes. Deb said they would prefer to separate the lanes but there are space limitations in many of the options. Bill added that the lane separation is partially a safety and efficiency issue and from an operational standpoint it makes more sense for them to be separated.

A stakeholder asked why Concept 4 is called buffer status quo. Deb replied that it's because there is no change in the footprint of the existing building in the industrial buffer.

Nine Concepts Discussion – Digging Deeper

Entire Group

The stakeholders and observers walked around to the different stations to view each concept and ask questions of the project team. They used post-its to provide comments and questions about each concept.

Nine Concepts Workshop – Narrowing to Five

Penny Mabie, EnviroIssues

Penny reconvened the workshop. A stakeholder asked if there is an absolute minimum square footage for the facility. Tim said the team is unable to answer that question. He said the space relies heavily on how the traffic is moved through it. A smaller space doesn't necessarily mean a less efficient space.

An observer said that it was very important to neighbors that the buffer zone be protected. Another observer asked if storage on the tipping floor was intended to be maximized for more than a day's worth of storage. Tim said that it was even though it's cleared at night. It happens from time to time that the station reaches capacity and SPU has to divert people to the south transfer station. Dan Costello reminded the group that per SPU's direction, the design team has capped traffic numbers at 2007 levels, not predicted growth levels. He added that the SPU is making a commitment to not overbuild this station.

Penny went through each of the concepts and read the comments and questions to the entire group. Below are the comments and questions that the stakeholders (S) and observers (O) wrote for each concept. The text in the brackets is used to help clarify. Also included is any discussion that took place while Penny was reading the comments and questions to the group.

Concept 1: Base Scenario

- (S) It's so great to have a new protected view here [N. 35th Street and Woodlawn Avenue N.]
- (S) I really want to see what's happening on the south end of the property. South end: mobile food vendors, carts (like Portland), p-patches, exercise equipment and benches, solar panel demonstration sites, climbing wall
- (S) The most wasted space of all for parking, loud turnaround and entry/exit lane. Inefficient.
- (S) Too big
- (S) Too close to neighbors
- (S) Recycling too close to Woodlawn Avenue N. and east neighbors
- (S) Can we squeeze education/school field trip meeting room in any of these?
- (S) I like that this opens up the view.
- (S) Operationally seems to work very well
- (O) Great view [at N. 35th Street and Woodlawn Avenue N.]
- (O) Too close to neighbors
- (O) Reuse and recycling too close to neighbors
- (O) Transfer station encroaches into the buffer that protects neighbors
- (O) Swap recycling and parking and lid parking lot

Concept 2: Maximum scenario

- (S) Need to have storage inside and this has a lot of backing up = noise
- (S) Too big
- (S) Prefer option 1 – or smaller building layouts

- (S) Don't see the need for separating traffic in this layout
- (S) Transponders for commercial and/or regular users
- (S) Inefficient use of space on site
- (S) Lots of space used for traffic lanes and truck parking
- (S) Reuse and recycle too close to Woodlawn Avenue N.
- (S) Station is 62,000 sq ft, more than three times the current size and 10,500 sq ft of additional space for reuse and recycling
- (S) Too large for residential neighborhood
- (S) The commercial and self haul traffic should be separated to speed it up. In the new station, the traffic will be the loudest element.
- (S) Like to have incoming users separated (commercial from self-haul) and dump trucks in special lane
- (S) I'm concerned with 10,500ft² of reuse space – more long term flexible space is needed
- (O) Three times current size; this is unacceptable for the site and neighborhood
- (O) Transfer station encroached into buffer which was put in place to protect neighbors
- (O) Too close to neighbors
- (O) Too many east facing openings

Concept 3: No Rezone No Street Vacation

- (S) Recycle [building] over trailer entry? To fit recycle in before transfer and scales
- (S) Move scales and recycling to west end
- (S) Turn 1550 parcel into a community center
- (S) Entirely too little recycling offered (Agree)
- (O) Could recycling go over this [truck turnaround] area?
- (O) Don't like parking lot at Carr Place N. and prefer view at the northeast corner provided by all other options

Discussion:

Concept 4: Buffer Status Quo

- (S) 10,500ft² for reuse and recycling, why so large?
- (S) Reuse and recycling too close to Woodlawn and surrounding north and east neighbors
- (S) Lots of wasted space and impervious cover for truck turnarounds and parking
- (S) Not a very practical plan
- (S) Expensive to build
- (S) Transponders for commercial and/or regular users
- (S) Like to have incoming users separated (commercial from self haul) and dump trucks in special lane
- (S) Install p-patch in northeast corner
- (O) Too big, too close to neighbors
- (O) Aesthetically pleasing retaining wall
- (O) Maintenance of green space highly important
- (O) Entrance on Woodlawn is bad
- (O) Lots of paving in this scheme is also not good
- (O) No entrance to Woodlawn.
- (O) Discourage street parking for employees

Discussion:

A stakeholder mentioned that she's concerned about the parking implications that an entrance to an administration building on Woodlawn Avenue N. could cause.

Concept 8: Vista

- (S) I like all the storage containers and max/most mobility of trucks being inside
- (S) Reuse and recycling too close to Woodlawn and surrounding north and east neighbors
- (S) Reuse and recycle 10,500 sq. ft. why so large?
- (S) Like lip-acoustic wall
- (S) I like 2 green roofs
- (S) I also like recycling closer to 34th.
- (S) Cantilever lid is a great option in all scenarios
- (S) Building shifted south is also good
- (S) P-Patch community garden over employee parking area
- (S) Make these places lively public spaces [near reuse and recycling area]
- (S) Like this green roof over parking and recycling - best option for these
- (S) Best option, enough room for present and future recycling needs. Nice park feel on corner.
- (S) Like 10,000+ sq. ft. recycling area
- (S) Can the admin/offices be moved to the south side to give a more “retail/office” look along N. 34th?
- (S) Can we put on-site parking in front again on the south side – create activity or put viewing gallery with museum-like space along south.
- (O) Move road to the south
- (O) Large east-facing opening means more neighborhood noise
- (O) Reuse and recycling is too close to neighbors
- (O) Could recycling and parking shift 90 feet to the west and stack over tractor trailer turning lanes?
- (O) Shift drive lanes south toward transfer station and move admin to facilitate this

Concept 9: Stacked with Rezone

- (S) Move recycling to the west about 30 feet
- (S) Reposition the entrance to the reuse and recycling so there is no entry from Woodlawn
- (S) Better if building bigger, intrude into IB, and expand north into IB
- (S) What if you expand into IB and move reuse to north of site
- (S) Contorted/compromised just to preserve exact IB boundary – silly in the big picture
- (S) Stacked seems very technically complex and expensive seems problematic
- (S) Door on east side seems to have a noise issue
- (S) Elevated building = \$\$\$?
- (S) Can we get all traffic to enter at same entrance?
- (S) Like 10,000+ sq. ft. recycling area
- (O) Move inbound commercial/self haul to space between recycling and transfer station 0 according to Dan you lessen the grade drop along the drive
- (O) Make recycling longer and little narrower to fit the inbound lane
- (O) Move parking lot to SE corner of Carr if necessary
- (O) Stacked makes good use of a tight site to optimize circulation and SPU’s operational space
- (O) Cost for this may need to be more than for a more open non-urban site
- (O) Preserve protections for neighbors
- (O) Recycling door opening to the east is not good for residents, otherwise a good solution
- (O) Can recycling move west more?
- (O) Shift entrance for recycling to west side of building and shift exit streets west towards transfer station.
- (O) Relocate admin to northwest corner

Discussion:

A stakeholder said this is a concept that could be massaged to work. It has many varied comments.

Concept 10: Stacked without rezone

- (S) Really want SH, commercial, recycling to have separate lanes/entries
- (S) Recycling area too small, feels like an afterthought (seconded)
- (S) This site is so small already – we really need to use the 1550 building
- (S) Vacate all of Carr Place
- (S) Consider developing a separate recycling center over the tractor trailer entrance or shift transfer station west to develop recycling and parking on Carr Place.
- (S) Turn 1550 building into a community center
- (S) Recycling area too small
- (S) 1550 “reuse” means development by a commercial developer
- (O) This scheme preserves the buffer for the neighborhood - do not rezone commercial.

Discussion:

A stakeholder asked if Concept 10 was like Concept 3 with an administration building. Tim replied that it was. Another stakeholder asked if the team would explain why this option doesn't have amenities like some of the other options. Deb explained that the park is considered a trade-off for the vacation of Carr Pl N. Without a street vacation or rezone, space is limited and SPU is limited in what it can provide for community amenities.

Concept 11: Non-IB

- (S) Recycling area not big enough
- (S) Entry too close to Woodlawn and the North end neighbors.
- (S) Station is 60,000ft²! Smaller station could permit moving the facility west.
- (S) Moves more traffic onto 35th.
- (S) I like the ease of going only to recycling with this design.
- (S) Too many compromises to preserve a fictional dotted line.
- (O) Building is too far east for residents
- (O) Don't like exit onto 35th.
- (O) Building too close to residences.
- (O) Drive lanes in IB too far north – move south.
- (O) Make Woodlawn one-way northbound due to shortcuts to NRDS entrance

Discussion:

A stakeholder said that an engineer told her that there were some things that could be done to make the recycling building bigger in Concepts 11 and 12. She urged the other stakeholders not to reject these concepts because the recycling buildings were small. An observer asked the team to consider switching parking and recycling buildings in Concept 11. Dan Costello replied that the parking and the recycling buildings are where they are to protect the industrial buffer.

Concept 12: Western Entry

- (S) Can we put a climbing wall on N. 34th Street?
- (S) Recycling too small (Yes! Triple!)
- (S) Customers can back up looking over left shoulder – this is good.
- (S) What happens to reuse?
- (S) Favorite option
- (S) Since traffic is loudest element this will be the noisiest option.
- (S) Recyclers need to cross outbound traffic and cut into inbound traffic – potentially dangerous
- (S) Is left turn into station allowed? If not, greater pressure on Woodlawn – more cut thrus
- (S) Driveway seems too complex – I think there would be issues with people navigating the site

(S) Move main building 20-30 feet to the east. Keep truck entry same – more usable room or bigger recycling

(S) Rest of the options – addresses the buffer, traffic flow and shifts to west entry. Moves recycling so neighbors won't be impacted by noise; provides options for parking lot and green space along Woodlawn.

(S) Reduce size of main building

(S) Move facility to the west

(S) Could make recycling a bit bigger

(S) Recycling area not big enough

(O) Like park at Carr Place N.

(O) Like view improvement at N. 35th and Woodlawn intersection

(O) I like west entrance, I like buffers, great!

(O) Favorite! All openings to center face away from neighborhood

(O) Looks like you could increase size of recycling

(O) Building pushes away from residents

(O) I like this option

(O) The west entrance makes sense for neighbors

(O) Circulation is stacked which is great for sound, particularly visual control

Discussion:

A stakeholder thanked the design team for thinking outside the box on this concept. Other stakeholders agreed. Another stakeholder said she was concerned with the square footage usability in the future with this option. A stakeholder added that the square footage was a matter of efficiency. Tim told the group that the 62,000 sq. footage of the building doesn't actually allow for much storage since much of the space is used for vehicle maneuvering. It's best to use the matrix in the packets to determine the most functional facility. An observer asked if it was possible to shift the outflow of the recycling building to the middle of the building to create more space.

Penny then asked the group to think about which options they could easily leave behind.

One stakeholder said she could get rid of Concept 1 because it doesn't have anything that stands out to her. Several other stakeholders said they preferred to get rid of Concept 3. Penny asked some of the stakeholders who wanted to keep Concept 3 why they wanted to keep it. One stakeholder said she would like to keep one of the options where the 1550 isn't rezoned on the table. Another stakeholder said she would like to hear from SPU to learn which concepts work best operationally and which ones would be cost prohibitive.

Penny asked the rest of the group if it would be helpful to hear from SPU what they think of these options. The group agreed.

Bill walked everyone through the options by grouping the concepts into similar categories.

Concepts 3 and 10

Both of these are the no-rezone options where the 1550 property is not developed as part of the project. The building is larger in Concept 10 because parts of this concept (i.e. trailer parking, truck maneuvering) are underground. Tim added that there could be a street vacation in both options, which would give the community the park in the Carr Place N. parking lot. SPU prefers Concept 10 because it handles the flow better. They anticipate long back-ups with Concept 3.

Concepts 11 and 12

These options both shifted operations to the west. Concept 12 has a lot of square footage, but it's an inefficient design due to the interior vehicle maneuvering. SPU favors Concept 11 for that reason.

Concepts 1, 2, 4, 8 and 9

Concept 4 has the largest traffic impacts off site and the administration building isn't in the best location because it's far removed from the transfer station floor. SPU's biggest concern with Concept 9 is that by shifting the entrance for the station to the east, the entrance road to the site is too steep. SPU would like to create a campus where the recycling building and the transfer station are on the same level. To alleviate this problem, the driveways would need to be moved farther west. SPU would move 1, 2 and 8 forward.

Tim said that there are some of those options that SPU could leave behind to accommodate Option 12 because it seems to be a stakeholder favorite.

One of the stakeholders asked if would be possible to create hybrids of some of the similar options, like 8 and 9, 3 and 10 and 11 and 12. Dan replied that it may not be possible to combine some of the options because it would create too many flaws in the design.

Nancy Ahern recapped that it sounds like it's very important to have a no rezone option, an option that has a western entry, with three other options as an amalgamation of the others. This would allow for five different concepts to carry through the next development phase. Penny asked the stakeholders if SPU and the design team should come back after reviewing the comments from tonight to present what they believe are the five concepts that should move forward.

One stakeholder expressed his frustration at the lack of decision making in this meeting and requested that the group just vote on the options they want to move forward. Another stakeholder agreed. Other stakeholders expressed concern about rushing the process and making a poor decision.

Penny asked the group to vote on which options they would like to see move forward.

Straw poll (each stakeholders had up to five votes):

Concept 1: 2 votes
Concept 2: 7 votes
Concept 3: 2 votes
Concept 4: 2 votes
Concept 8: 7 votes
Concept 9: 3 votes
Concept 10: 8 votes
Concept 11: 9 votes
Concept 12: 5 votes

NEXT STEPS

Penny Mabie, EnviroIssues

Penny announced that after this meeting the design team will take the input from the stakeholders and observers and develop five revised concepts that will be reviewed at an additional meeting before

Workshop 3 for confirmation from the stakeholder group. At Workshop 3, SPU will present cost information for the five concepts. The stakeholder group will narrow the concepts down to two. All stakeholder group meetings are open to the public.

EnviroIssues will work with the stakeholder group and SPU to schedule the additional meeting.

Information about the next meeting will be posted online when available:
www.seattle.gov/util/transferstations.

Comment forms received

Please see attachment for the comment forms submitted at this meeting.

COMMENT FORMS RECEIVED

One comment form was submitted at this meeting. Below is the verbatim content of the forms. Identifying information has been omitted.

Comment 1:

Please continue to explore concepts 12, 10, 9 and 4 – with adjustments these four schemes could be good neighbors.

Remember protections for neighbors.

Should we include the comments from Rob here as well?